

223685

Board of Selectmen

MEETING TUESDAYS AT 7 00 P M • UPPER TOWN HALL • 1 MAIN STREET • AYER, MASSACHUSETTS 01432

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Town Administrator
(978) 772-8210



September 19, 2008



Surface Transportation Board
Attn Ann Newman
395 E Street, S W.
Washington, DC 20024

**RE: Additional Copies of Filed Materials
Finance Docket No. 35147
Norfolk Southern Railway Company, Pan Am Railways, Inc. et al.
Joint Operating Agreements – Pan Am Southern LLC**

Dear Ms Newman:

In response to your telephone request enclosed please find ten color copies of the proposed monitoring well locations associated with the Town of Ayer's Spectacle Pond wellfield.

As noted in prior filings, a planned auto-unloading facility would be situated directly atop the Mass Dept. of Environmental Protection designated Zone II aquifer recharge area for the Town's primary drinking water supply.

Also enclosed are aerial photographs that illustrate the close proximity of an unused auto-unloading facility located along the same rail line but not within the Zone II aquifer area

The Town's recommendation is that the STB require the railroad to utilize the existing facility. The Town also requests the railroad allow installation of the monitoring wells as depicted in the attached plans of Geolnsight, Inc

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shaun A. Suhoski".

Shaun A. Suhoski
Town Administrator

cc: Board of Selectmen
Conservation Commission
Water Dept Foreman
Board of Health

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings

SEP 25 2008

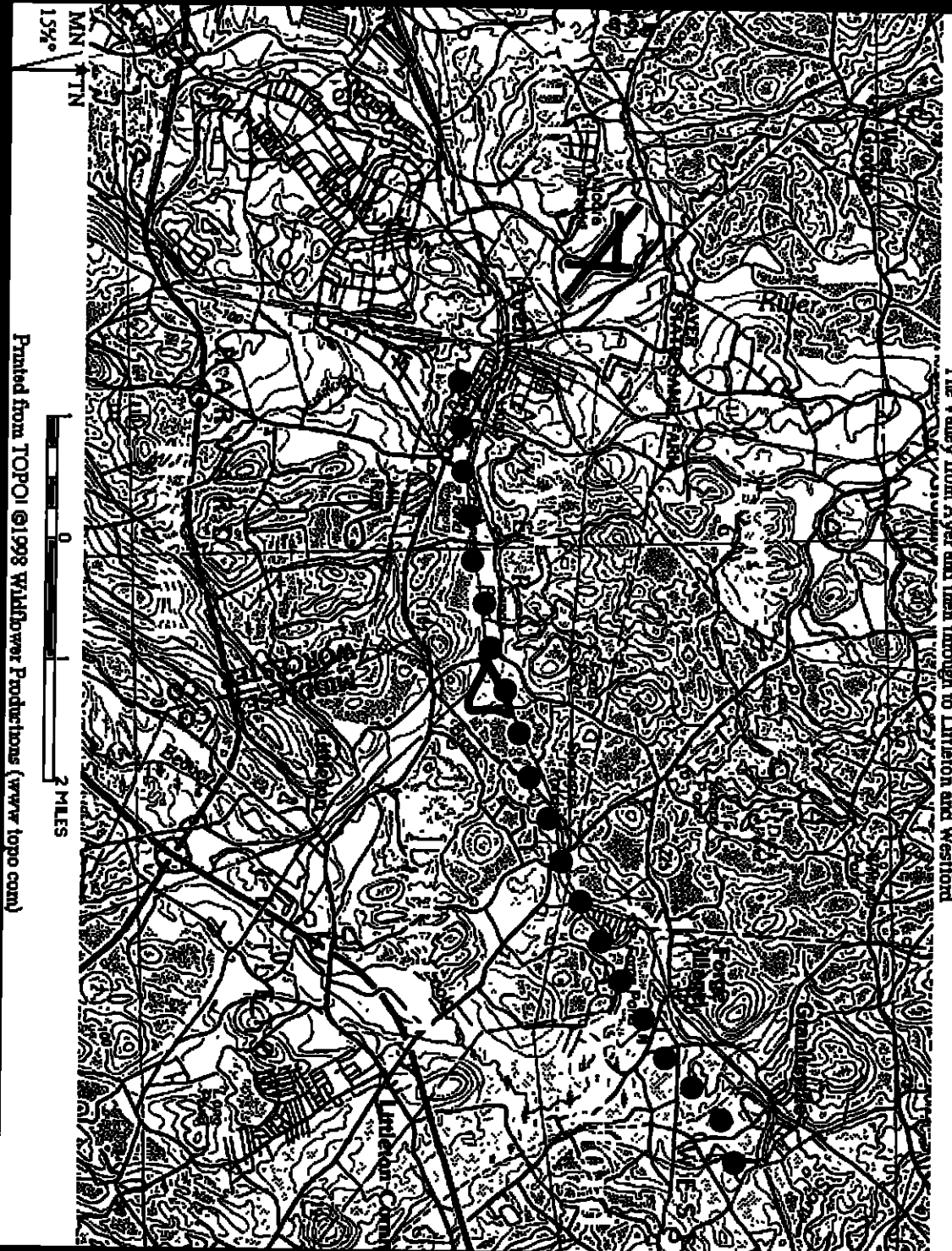
Part of
Public Record

CONCERNS with
*Pain Alm Southern Proposed
Auto Unloading Facility*

August 25th, 2008

PAS and the Valley Shared by Ayer, Littleton and Westford

The Valley from Ayer and then through to Littleton and Westford



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Background

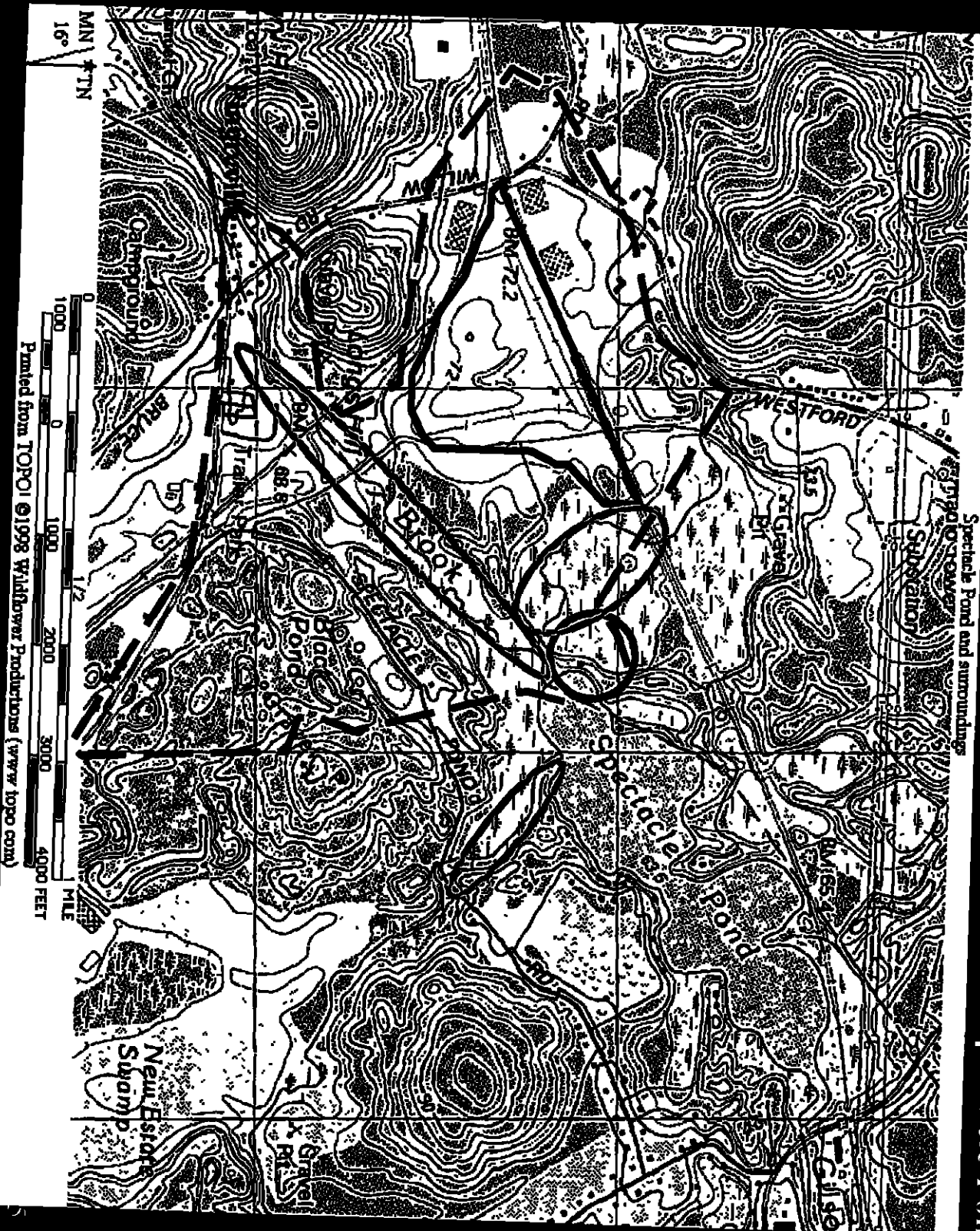
The proposal to merge PanAm (formerly Guilford Transportation Industries) and Norfolk Southern to form PanAm Southern (PAS) includes a plan to build an auto unloading facility in Ayer to accommodate 810 cars.

- Concerns about the unloading facility at this location:
 - On aquifer for Ayer and Littleton's Water Supply
 - Surrounded by wetlands
 - Home to endangered species – turtles and salamanders
- Alternate facility exists and is currently not in use
 - Guilford owns an auto unloading site in Ayer that is leased to CSX until 2017

Saving Our Aquifer

“Suddenly it is so clear: the world is running out of fresh water. Humanity is polluting, diverting and depleting the wellspring of life at a startling rate. With every passing day, our demand for fresh water outpaces its availability and thousands more people are put at risk.”
from Blue Gold by Barlow and Clarke.

Proposed site, Zone I (solid line) and Zone II (dashed line). Inlets to Spectacle Pond



Well Sites



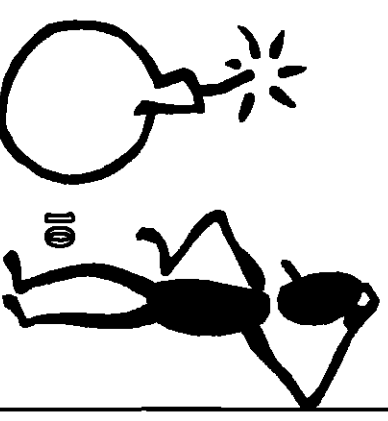
Spectacle Pond Wells

- Major source of water for towns of Ayer & Littleton
 - Collective capacity of 3.5 million gallons per day for the 3 wells for Ayer and Littleton
 - NO new sources of sufficient, adequate water can be developed within the town of Ayer
 - Only pristine water supply for Ayer
- Source of water for our industries which rely heavily on it for their products
 - Cairns, Nasoya, Aquafina, Pepsi, Nashoba Hospital
- Paving large tracts of land reduces both the quality and quantity of water recharge

Eyobai 25th

ImperVIOUS Surfaces Diminish Water Quantity and Quality

- At even low level of imperviousness (10%)
 - Increased runoff
 - Reduced water quality
 - Shrinks biodiversity
 - Diminishes aquifer volume
- Rain water lost through evaporation
- And what if there is a spill?



Special Features of this Area

- Depth of groundwater ranges between 3.66' to 28' with an average depth of 6' – 8'
- Soil is mainly sand and gravel
- Limited vegetation
- Area down gradient from the site contains wetlands and thick, moist dark anaerobic peat which is difficult to clean up
- Rainwater is immediately absorbed – no puddles

Accidental Fuel Spills Can Occur

- Fuel spill can occur from
 - Train locomotive
 - 18- wheel trucks
 - New cars
 - Used employee cars
 - Hydraulic lifts

Fuel Spills Do Occur

- 5/30/2008 – Diesel fuel spill at Willow Rd. Crossing. Notified by the Railroad. The spill was a minor spill under 10 gallons and cleaned up by Rail Road HazMat clean up.
- 7/08/2007 – Diesel fuel spill in Hill Rail Yard from leaking fuel line on train. Could have been as much as 100 gallons. Train was moved to Devens where it continued to leak causing two areas of diesel contamination.
- 8/09/2006 – Diesel fuel spill in Hill Rail Yard from leaking train. Notified the day after the leak by concerned worker. Could have been as much as 1700 gallons.
- 09/01/2003 – Investigated a modified trash barrel containing empty bags of poison on rail road property off Willow Rd.
- 10/18/2001 - Leaking Methanol tank car in Hill Rail Yard- Major incident controlled by District 6 Haz – Mat Team.
- 10/15/98- Diesel fuel leak approximately 10-12 gallons. Hill Rail Yard

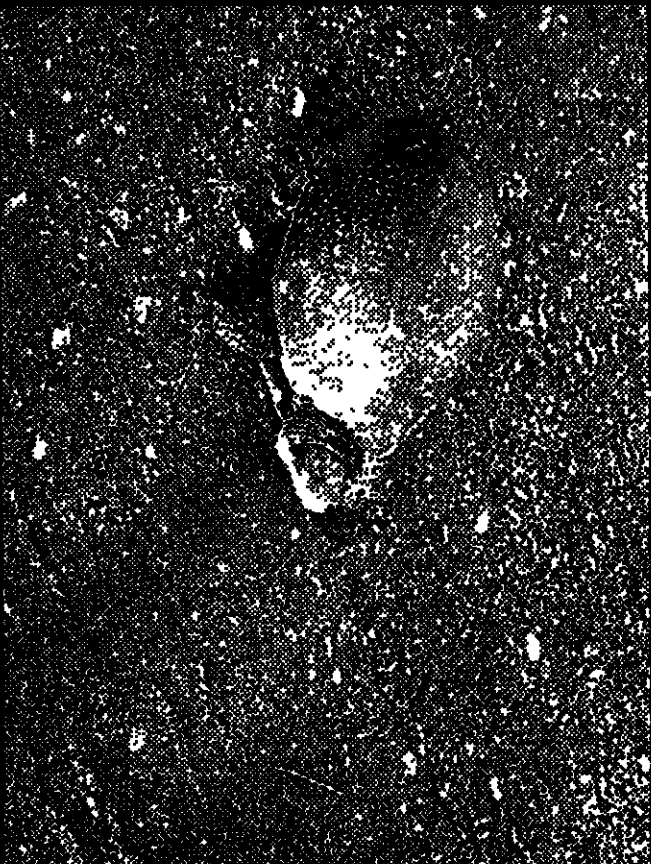
Spill Locations



Risk

- Cleanup cost is extreme
 - Remove the contaminant
 - Provide alternate water sources for towns and industries
 - Industries that rely on water for their products will be forced to shut down
 - Hospital/nursing home patients will be put at risk

Blanding's Turtles



- Endangered species
- Local sightings registered with the National Heritage Endangered Species Program
- Other sightings – spotted turtle, blue spotted salamander

Recommendation

- We recommend that the PAS proposal to build a new unloading facility on the San Vel site be rejected
 - The environmentally sensitive site is not appropriate for this kind of development.
 - An alternate site already exists that is directly across the street and NOT in zone III

Well Sites



Unloading Site Locations



Current
Site

Proposed
Site

42°33'31.32"

W

elev: 58 m

Apr 2005

Eye alt: 2.95 km

Map data ©1998, 2005, Google, Inc.
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Google



LEGEND
PROPOSED WELL LOCATIONS

D R A F T

NOTES:

1. THE OWNER HAS BEEN ADVISED THAT THE PROPOSED WELL LOCATIONS ARE IN THE PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY AND THAT THE PROPOSED POND IS IN THE PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY.



CLIENT		TOWN OF AYER	
PROJECT		SPECTACLE POND WELLFIELD	
TITLE		PROPOSED WELL LOCATIONS PAN AM PROPERTY	
DESIGNED BY	DATE	CHECKED BY	DATE
PLS	7/20/07	PLS	7/20/07
SCALE	1" = 50'	PROJECT NO.	5-03-000
DRAWN BY		1 A	



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